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Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln

AND

Notes of a Visit to California.

Two Lectures.

BY

JOSHUA F. SPEED.

With a Sketch of His Life.

LOUISVILLE, KY.

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JOSHUA FRY SPEED.

Joshua Fry Speed was born November 14, 1814. His parents were John Speed and Lucy G. Speed. They came from Virginia to Kentucky in 1783, in their early youth. The father of John Speed was Captain James Speed, who was born in Mecklinburg, Va., and obtained his title by service in the Revolutionary War. The father of Lucy G. Speed was Joshua Fry. Captain James Speed and Joshua Fry are both noted in the early history of Kentucky. The former, as a member of the Conventions by which the State was separated from Virginia and became a separate commonwealth; the latter for his connection with educational interests. The ancestors of each came from England, and settled in Virginia prior to the beginning of the last century.

John Speed and Lucy G. Fry were married in 1809. They lived at the old homestead, known as Farmington, on the Louisville and Bardstown Turnpike road, about five miles from Louisville. There Joshua F. Speed was born, the fifth in a family of ten children, all of whom except one survived him. He was well educated at the schools in Jefferson County, and under the tuition of Joshua Fry, and at St. Joseph's College, at Bardstown.

It is related that when at school as a child he replied to questions in the same frank, pointed, and comprehensive manner that characterized him as a man. He was always positive and direct, and often his plainness of speech amounted to bluntness.

While at college he fell sick, and was cared for at the house of his uncle, who lived near Bardstown. When he recovered he rode home to his father on horseback, that being the mode of traveling in that day.

His father was anxious for him to return to college, but he steadfastly refused, declaring he was old enough to begin to make his own way in the world. He then spent between two and three years as a clerk in the wholesale store of Wm. H. Pope, then the largest establishment in Louisville.

After this he spent seven years of his life as a merchant in Springfield, Ill. He makes reference to this in his lecture upon Abraham Lincoln. At Springfield he became an intimate friend not only of Mr. Lincoln, but also of Stephen A. Douglas, Col. John Hardin, Col. Baker, Gen. Shields, Judge Gillespie, Nathaniel Pope, and others.

It is noticeable that his association was with men of that class. From his boyhood he regarded life with a serious business-like gravity, which led him to seek the companionship of young men of like disposition, or of persons older than himself.

His life at Springfield furnished many incidents amusing and interesting, which he was fond of relating.

Often in after years, in a circle of friends, his memory would recur to that period, and he would tell his experiences as a country merchant in his crisp narrative style, half playful, half serious, so as to charm all who heard him.

Among his friends at Springfield he showed the same characteristics that became more conspicuous in later years. He took a lively interest in public affairs, and assisted in editing a newspaper, but his personal friends and associates were in all parties. His friendships were never affected by political or religious views differing from his own.

He returned from Springfield to Kentucky in the year 1842, and engaged in farming for about nine years. He was married February 15, 1842, to Miss Fanny Henning, a sister of James W. Henning, of Louisville. They made their home on a farm, in the Pond Settlement neighborhood, about thirteen miles from Louisville, on the Salt River road.

It was a very pretty place, lying at the foot of the knobs. The dwelling was a log house. They both often recurred to their farm-life as the happiest part of their lives. She was particularly fond of flowers, and in this respect he was a genial companion. The grounds about the house were covered with roses, the beauty of which was the subject of remark by all their neighbors and visitors from the city. In addition to the enjoyment of these, they spent many hours together in the fields and woods, seeking rare species of wild flowers. He

had a vein of sentiment in his nature which made him fond of flowers and poetry, which his active business never eradicated. Evidences of this are found in his letters and lectures, and his friends recall how often it was manifested in his conversation.

In the year 1848, while he lived on the farm, he was elected to represent Jefferson County in the State Legislature. Though often solicited, he would never again consent to become a candidate for or hold any office.

He moved into the city of Louisville in 1851, and formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, James W. Henning, in the real-estate business. This relation continued until his death. Until the year 1861 his life was uneventful, he pursued his vocation with great success, devoting to it his entire time and energy. The firm of Henning and Speed became one of the best known in Louisville. It transacted a very large and important business. The two partners were admirably suited to each other. Mr. Henning possessed an unequaled knowledge of the real estate in the city and county. Mr. Speed had no superior as a financier. Their business embraced agencies for many of the largest owners of city property, and they were trustees of many large estates. The public records show the large interests intrusted to their care by wills, deeds of trusts, and appointment by the courts. In the division of estates and valuation of property they were constantly appealed to. In all such matters their judgment was so much relied on that the courts, of their own motion, not infrequently

directed litigants to obtain the testimony of one or the other before deciding a controversy.

Among their agencies were estates of real and personal property belonging to persons who resided in the South during the war. In the midst of that destructive conflict, these persons apprehended their possessions were swept away; but when the war ended they found every thing preserved with the steadily accumulated earning of four years. Their gratitude naturally found expression in beautiful tokens of remembrance.

Joshua Speed also managed the estates of his widowed mother and his unmarried and widowed sisters.

The uniform positive and emphatic testimony of all is in praise of his ability, fidelity, and fairness. He gave his personal attention to all business intrusted to him. No one knew better how to invest money, or how to buy and sell property. His skill and sound judgment not only built up for himself a handsome fortune, it was all put forth to the best advantage for the benefit of all whose interests were in his hands.

In 1861 his whole heart was in the Union cause, and the intimate acquaintance he had with Mr. Lincoln enabled him to exert all his ability directly for that cause.

One of the fruits of their intimacy was a visit of Mr. Lincoln to Kentucky some years prior to the war. He saw, at the old Farmington homestead, slavery in the form often spoken of as patriarchal—the mildest, best phase of it. But on his return, he witnessed on the

steamer the scene described in his letter, quoted in Mr. Speed's lecture. There was the bitterness of the institution. He thus spoke from actual knowledge the words, "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong."

Another of the fruits of this intimacy was, that in that critical period, when so much depended on the position Kentucky would take, the President could rely upon one whose knowledge of the State, ability, judgment, and earnest fidelity were all of the highest order.

This was, perhaps, the most active part of Mr. Speed's life. He made many trips to Washington. He was intrusted with the most important and delicate missions. His every-day intercourse was with the President and members of the Cabinet, and the highest officers of the army. In this connection two things are most striking: *First*, his entire self abnegation both as to emoluments and honors. He gave freely his time, energies, and means to the cause he had at heart, and all without attracting the slightest attention to himself. None but those with whom his business was, knew of that in which he was engaged. *Second*, he offended no one, and incurred no ill-will. He was full of generosity and liberality to individuals whose sentiments differed from his own, while he opposed the cause they espoused. An incident will illustrate this: While the war was raging he was summoned as grand juror in the Federal Court. The grand jurors were required to make oath that they had not given aid or comfort to the enemy of the coun-

try. To the surprise of every one he said he did not know that he could take that oath. The judge inquired the reason. "Because," said he, "I have furnished prisoners with money, when I knew they were going to engage in the rebellion." The court promptly stated that this was no disqualification.

The following extract from a letter from Gen. John W. Finnell, who was Adj't General of Kentucky during the war, sets forth Mr. Speed's services to his country at that time:

In the earlier days of the rebellion, Joshua F. Speed played a very important, but before the general public an inconspicuous part in saving Kentucky to the cause of the Union. He was a quiet, observant, courageous man. Full of energy and resource, self reliant, ardently attached to the Union, and fixed in the noble purpose to do his whole duty, letting consequences take care of themselves.

He was the intimate and trusted friend of the great Lincoln, the companion and associate of his younger days, and was rightly estimated by the martyred President for his matchless integrity and unfaltering love of country.

To him Gen. Nelson was sent with the arms furnished by the Federal Government for distribution among the Union men of Kentucky, and under his direction the arms were distributed and placed in loyal hands. He it was who called the first meeting of prominent Unionists, held at Frankfort early in May, 1861, to devise means to save the State from the designs of the agents and friends of the Confederacy. He held numerous conferences all through that summer, at different parts in the State, with prominent friends of the Union, and seemed at all times instinctively to grasp the situation and to fully comprehend the peril; to see so clearly the needs of the hour, that though his views were presented modestly, and in such a sometimes provokingly quiet way, yet they were almost uniformly adopted as the wisest and the best.

There never was at any time a question of the attachment of an overwhelming majority of the people of Kentucky to the Union; but it required the greatest possible prudence and the wisest statesmanship to direct the public mind to the real question presented by the seces-

sionists; and there was danger, imminent and threatening, that Kentucky might falter upon the question as it was so artfully and so persistently urged, "Are you going South, or are you going North?" And numbers of our best men grew impatient at what they called the "timid policy" of the more cautious, and insisted upon declaring openly for the Union and "coercion." Mr. Speed, in the frequent discussions growing out of this condition of things, displayed his high qualities of courage, prudence, and a matchless self-control. He was for the Union under all circumstances, without condition—but he recognized the force and power of our geographical and social connection with the South, and of the prejudices as well which grew out of it. His aim was to hold Kentucky until the sober thought of her people should bring them to see clearly and unmistakably the real designs of the secessionists—the real issue which they presented—when he felt doubly sure that they would never abandon the Union and the old flag. To this end he worked intelligently, earnestly, and persistently, and his influence was felt all over the State.

The election in August, 1861, resulted in the return of an overwhelming majority of Union men to the General Assembly. That body met early in September of the same year, and shortly after its meeting passed resolutions taking a firm stand for the Union, directing the raising of troops for the Federal service, and for borrowing money from the banks of the State for subsistence, equipment, etc. A committee of the General Assembly was sent to Louisville to negotiate with the banks of that city. The sums asked for seemed large as things then looked (yet it would hardly be considered a sufficient guarantee for a season of opera now). There was a hesitancy on the part of one or two of the banks, notably one of them, and Mr. Speed's services were again called into requisition. His interview with the hesitating officials was brief, but it was pointed and earnest. It was successful.

In the organization of our Kentucky volunteer soldiers, and in the general conduct of our State affairs, particularly during 1861–2, there were questions of interest and difficulty very frequently arising between the General Government and that of the State, and between the National and State military officials. There were wants to be supplied, arms for recruits, munitions of war, etc., for our volunteers; and besides "the want of confidence in the loyalty of the Border States" which manifested itself almost daily among some of the Federal officials at Washington, there was real difficulty in procuring the much-needed arms and supplies, etc., because it often happened the Government did not have them, and could not get them. In all these and kindred

difficulties and troubles, the State Military Board and officials had recourse to Mr. Speed. He was at all times prompt to respond to any call upon him, and ready to go to Washington when his services were deemed of value or importance to the State. His influence with Mr. Lincoln was potent. *He* knew that Mr. Lincoln loved Kentucky, and had confidence in the truth and loyalty of her people who had declared for the Union. His mission was uniformly successful. All these things he did so quietly and so modestly "that one scarce knew it was doing until it was done."

His position was peculiar: without at any time an office, civil or military, he was the trusted confidant, adviser and counselor of both the civil and military authorities of the State and Nation all through the rebellion. He was a man of few words, often painfully reticent, never in a hurry, never disconcerted; he seemed intuitively to know the right thing to do, and the right time to do it. His compensation was found alone in the consciousness of duty performed. He uniformly declined to receive pay for any time or effort he was asked to give to the cause of his country.

In my judgment, no citizen of the Commonwealth rendered larger or more important and effective service to the Union cause in Kentucky, during all the dark days of the rebellion, than did that noble gentleman and patriotic citizen, JOSHUA F. SPEED.

From the close of the war until his failing health which preceded his death, he devoted himself to his business. He also engaged in many enterprises affecting the progress and welfare of the city. He was a projector of the "Short Line" Railroad, and director in the company, Director in the Louisville & Bardstown Turnpike Company, the Louisville Cement Company, Savings Bank of Louisville, Talmage Ice Company, Louisville Hotel Company. During this period of his life he was one of the most conspicuous business men in Louisville.

In 1867 he purchased a beautiful tract of land, near the old Farmington homestead, lying on the waters of

Beargrass Creek, about two and a half miles from the city. There he built a residence, and beautified the place with landscape gardening. He planted almost every species of tree that grows in this latitude, flowering plants and shrubbery, and built extensive conservatories. There he and his devoted wife lived over again, amid the fragrance and beauty of flowers, the earlier years of their married life.

In 1874 they visited California. One of his lectures is an account of this trip.

His devotion to his wife was complete. When absent from her his letters were full of the tenderest sentiment. Many beautiful extracts might be published, but two will suffice:

I wrote to you yesterday, and to-day, having some leisure, I will write again upon the principle, I suppose, that where your treasure is there will your heart go. My earthly treasure is in you; not like the treasures only valuable in possession; not like other valuables acquiring increased value from increased quantity; but, satisfied with each other, we will go down the hill of life together, as we have risen.

The following is an extract from a letter written from home to his wife at Chautauqua:

Last evening, as I sat upon the porch watching the sun set, as we usually do, I thought of you and wished for you. Old Sol sank to rest in the arms of night so grandly, giving some new beauty with each expiring ray.

It seemed as though the clouds had more beautiful phantasms of every shape and form, like bridesmaids and bridegrooms, waiting in graceful attendance upon the wedding of day and night, than I ever saw before. Night, like the blushing bride, was coy and shy, and gave evidence of her modesty in her blushing cheeks, while day, like a gallant knight, who had won his spurs upon the bloody battle-field in the heady current of the fight, had done his duty, laid aside his helmet and his spear, and approached his bride in the rich and beautiful

garb of a lover. The wedding over, the stars came out, like guests invited to the feast, and, I suppose, kept up the carousal till dawn of day. I retired, and give no further report.

For his brothers and sisters he had the warmest affection, and felt bound to them by the strongest ties of fraternal regard and confidence. This was manifested in many ways and to the close of his life.

One of his notable characteristics was his abstractedness. He was a constant worker and thinker. The demands of business pressed constantly upon his mind; this often caused him to fail to recognize persons he met. On one occasion his wife, seeing him upon the street, caused her carriage to drive to the side-walk and she called to him. He turned and, seeing a lady in a carriage, approached, unconscious who it was. Seeing this she exclaimed, "Why, Joshua, are you crazy!" He said, "Why, Fanny, I did n't know you." On account of this characteristic he was often misjudged, his mental abstraction being taken for indifference.

His life was full of noble, kind, and generous deeds. He was liberal in his charities, and especially through his wife relieved the wants of thousands.

Another characteristic was entire absence of ostentation. He had no taste for display. No one but the beneficiary knew of his charity. It may be said with the strongest emphasis, his left hand knew not what his right hand did. He was charitable in his judgments. It was almost an unknown thing for him to condemn others.

He has no children, but his kindness and gentleness to children was most striking. Nor did he ever blame

others for too great parental fondness or indulgence. To his numerous nephews and nieces he endeared himself by his kindness and consideration. Some of them were almost always inmates of his house, and all regarded him with great fondness and admiration. Fanny Henning, the youngest daughter of James Henning, was loved like a daughter. Her death at his house was a deep affliction.

He was a believer in the Christian religion. He often said he believed the Bible, not because he understood it all, but because he believed it was God's Word; that, if he could understand it, he would not believe it was God's Word. Years before his death he often said he expected to be in the communion of the Church before he died. And so it was. He united with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The failure of the Savings Bank of Louisville was a great shock to him. At that time, January, 1881, his health had begun to fail, but he rallied his strength and energies to make the best of that unfortunate wreck. His last efforts in business were in behalf of the assets of that bank. When he had done all that his efforts could do, he began to decline under the power of a disease which had troubled him for years. He gave up business and sought relief at health resorts.

He spent the winter of 1881-2 at Nassau. Returning, he died May 29, 1882. He had possession of his mental faculties to the last, and ended a noble and busy life in peace with all men, and with a good hope of a blessed immortality.

REMINISCENCES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

In appearing before you to-night to give some reminiscences of the life of my early and much loved friend, Abraham Lincoln, I approach the subject with diffidence, and with a full sense that I am all-unequal to the task of delineating the character of a man whose name now fills the world, and whose character is studied by thinking men in every language, and is revered by all.

Pardon me, if I devote a few words upon myself and the State of Illinois, in which I spent my early manhood.

The spring of 1835 found me a merchant in the then village of Springfield, with one thousand two hundred inhabitants, now a great city of twenty thousand inhabitants. *Then* the population was sparse, the settlements being near the timber, and around the prairie, no one dreaming that those vast prairies would ever be entered, but that they would be held by the Government, and used perpetually as grazing fields for their stock. They had then no roads across them, save those made by the movers, then coming from the States south and east, principally Kentucky, Tenessee, Ohio, and New York. These came with long trains of wagons covered with

white sheets, filled with women and children, beds, bedding, and light furniture, all bound westward. The movers were of all grades and classes of society, from the cultivated ladies and gentlemen with ample means to the poor man who owns not more than his clothes, and who chopped wood and did work in the camp and drove the oxen as compensation for the privilege of moving with the train. *Now*, as I saw the State a few days ago, long lines of railroad trains have taken the place of the wagon trains, the iron rail has taken the place of the wagon rut, and the steam-engine has usurped the place of the ox-team.

Never shall I forget the grand prairie as I first saw it, in the fall of 1834. *Then*, covered with grass as high as our wheat, waving in the breeze and resembling the billows of the ocean as the shadows of the fleeting clouds passed over it. Sometimes the prairie was lit up by the burning grass, and as the flames were seen in the distance, like a ribbon of fire belting the horizon, it would almost seem that the distant clouds were on fire. *Now* you have cultivated fields, large farms with stately houses, and cities and towns with their numerous factories and mills, and every kind of modern building. It is pleasing to see this progress. Then every thing was plenty and every thing cheap. Now every thing plenty, but every thing is dear. Springfield, the capital of the State, is as near to New York now as she was to St. Louis then.

In the spring of 1836 I first saw Abraham Lincoln.

He had been a laborer, a flatboatman, a deputy surveyor, and for one term a member of the legislature. I heard him spoken of by those who knew him as a wonderful character. They boasted that he could outwrestle any man in the county, and that he could beat any lawyer in Springfield speaking.

In 1836 he was a candidate for re-election, and I believe I heard the first speech he ever made at the county-seat.

At that time there were but two parties, Whig and Democrat. Lincoln was a Whig and the leading man upon the ticket. I was then fresh from Kentucky, and had heard many of her great orators. It seemed to me then, as it seems to me now, that I never heard a more effective speaker. He carried the crowd with him and swayed them as he pleased. So deep an impression did he make, that George Forquer, a man of much celebrity as a sarcastic speaker and great State reputation as an orator, rose and asked the people to hear *him*. He commenced his speech by saying that this young man would have to be taken down, and he was sorry that the task devolved upon him. He made what was called one of his slasher-gaff speeches, dealing much in ridicule and sarcasm. Lincoln stood near him with his arms folded, never interrupting him. When Forquer was done Lincoln walked to the stand, and replied so fully and completely that his friends bore him from the court-house on their shoulders.

So deep an impression did this first speech make upon me that I remember its conclusion now.

Said he, "The gentleman commenced his speech by saying that this young man will have to be taken down, and he was sorry that the task devolved upon him. I am not so young in years as I am in the tricks and trades of a politician; but, live long, or die young, I would rather die now, than, like the gentleman, change my politics, and simultaneous with the change receive an office worth $3,000 per year, and then have to erect a lightning-rod over my house to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God." To understand the point of this, Forquer had been a Whig, but changed his politics, and had been appointed register of the land office, and over his house was the only lightning-rod in the town or county. Lincoln had seen it for the first time on the day before. Not understanding its properties, he made it a study that night by aid of a book, bought for the purpose, till he knew all about it.

The same quality of mind that made him look into and understand the use and properties of that lightning-rod made him study and understand all he saw. No matter how ridiculous his ignorance upon any subject might make him appear, he was never ashamed to acknowledge it; but he immediately addressed himself to the task of being ignorant no longer.

The life of a great and good man is like the current of a great river. When you see its force and power, you at once think of its source, and what tributaries go to make the great river. England is expending vast sums now to discover the source of the Nile, and our own

government at considerable expense sent an expedition to explore the Amazon and its valleys. So the student of history, when he hears of a great man who has attracted attention, desires to know whence he came, what was his origin, his habits of thought and study, and all the elements of his character.

Lincoln studied and appropriated to himself all that came within his observation. Every thing that he saw, read, or heard, added to the store of his information—because he thought upon it. No truth was too small to escape his observation, and no problem too intricate to escape a solution, if it was capable of being solved. Thought, hard, patient, laborious thought, these were the tributaries that made the bold, strong, irresistible current of his life. The great river gets its aliment from the water-shed that feeds it, and from the tributaries naturally flowing into it. Lincoln drew his supplies from the great store-house of nature. Constant thought enabled him to use all his information at all times and upon all subjects with force, ease, and grace.

As far as he knew, and it was only by tradition, his ancestors came from England with Penn and settled in Pennsylvania. Thence they drifted down to Virginia; thence to Kentucky, where Lincoln was born on the 12th of February, 1809, on the banks of Nolin, in what was then Hardin County, now Larue. He went from Kentucky to Indiana, where he lost, as he always called her, his "*angel mother*," at ten years of age. From Indiana, with his father and step-mother, he went to Illinois.

Leaving his father and step-mother in Macon County, he pushed on to Sangamon County, and stopped at New Salem, on the Sangamon River, where he became a boatman and made two trips to New Orleans. While a flatboatman he studied that subject, as he did every thing else, and invented a machine for lightening flatboats over shoals, a model of which is in the Patent Office now.

He resided at New Salem about eight years. The society was rough, the young men were all wild, and full of fun and frolic. All the manly sports that pertained to a frontier life were in vogue there. Running, wrestling, jumping, gander-pulling, and horse-racing. In all the games and races, in which he was not engaged, he was always selected as one of the judges. From the justness of his decisions on all occasions he was called Honest Abe. As he grew older, and until his death, his sobriquet was "Honest old Abe."

In the spring of 1837 he took his license as a lawyer. Then began with him the real battle of life. Leaving the field of his youthful sports, pleasures, and pains, where he was the leading man, he came to a bar then considered the best in the State, and perhaps as good as any in the West. He entered with diffidence upon his new career, coming in contact with Logan and Cyrus Walker, older than he and men of renown, John J. Hardin, E. D. Baker, Douglas, and Browning, all near his own age. They were all educated men, in the ordinary acceptation of the word. They had read many

books, and studied law, many of them with able lawyers. He had read but few books, but had studied those. They were such as he borrowed from his friend, John T. Stuart, with whom he formed a partnership. He studied them at his humble home on the banks of the Sangamon, without a preceptor or fellow student. With such preparation he came to bar. From this time forward he took a leading position in the State.

It was in the spring of 1837, and on the very day that he obtained his license, that our intimate acquaintance began. He had ridden into town on a borrowed horse, with no earthly property save a pair of saddle-bags containing a few clothes. I was a merchant at Springfield, and kept a large country store, embracing dry goods, groceries, hardware, books, medicines, bed-clothes, mattresses, in fact every thing that the country needed. Lincoln came into the store with his saddle-bags on his arm. He said he wanted to buy the furniture for a single bed. The mattress, blankets, sheets, coverlid, and pillow, according to the figures made by me, would cost seventeen dollars. He said that was perhaps cheap enough; but, small as the sum was, he was unable to pay it. But if I would credit him till Christmas, and his experiment as a lawyer was a success, he would pay then, saying, in the saddest tone, "If I fail in this, I do not know that I can ever pay you." As I looked up at him I thought then, and think now, that I never saw a sadder face.

I said to him, "You seem to be so much pained at contracting so small a debt, I think I can suggest a plan

by which you can avoid the debt and at the same time attain your end. I have a large room with a double bed up-stairs, which you are very welcome to share with me."

"Where is your room?" said he.

"Up-stairs," said I, pointing to a pair of winding stairs which led from the store to my room.

He took his saddle-bags on his arm, went up stairs, set them down on the floor, and came down with the most changed countenance. Beaming with pleasure he exclaimed, "Well, Speed, I am moved!"

Mr. Lincoln was then twenty-seven years old—a lawyer without a client, no money, all his earthly wealth consisting of the clothes he wore and the contents of his saddle-bags. For me to have seen him rise from this humble position, step by step, till he reached the Presidency—holding the reins of government in as trying times as any government ever had—accomplishing more during the four years of his administration than any man had ever done—keeping the peace with all foreign nations under most trying circumstances—putting down the most gigantic rebellion ever known—assassinated at fifty-eight years of age—borne to his final resting place in Illinois, amid the tears of the nation and of the civilized world, and even his former foes in arms acknowledging they had lost their best friend—seems more like fable than fact.

From the commencement of his political career he was the acknowledged standard-bearer of the Whig party in the State, and his supremacy was never questioned.

As a lawyer, after his first year, he was acknowledged among the best in the State. His analytical powers were marvelous. He always resolved every question into its primary elements, and gave up every point on his own side that did not seem to be invulnerable. One would think, to hear him present his case in the court, he was giving his case away. He would concede point after point to his adversary until it would seem his case was conceded entirely away. But he always reserved a point upon which he claimed a decision in his favor, and his concession magnified the strength of his claim. He rarely failed in gaining his cases in court.

Mr. Lincoln was a social man, though he did not seek company; it sought him. After he made his home with me, on every winter's night at my store, by a big wood fire, no matter how inclement the weather, eight or ten choice spirits assembled, without distinction of party. It was a sort of social club without organization. They came there because they were sure to find Lincoln. His habit was to engage in conversation upon any and all subjects except politics.

One evening a political argument sprang up between Lincoln and Douglas, which for a time ran high. Douglas sprang to his feet and said, "Gentlemen, this is no place to talk politics; we will discuss the questions publicly with you."

A few days after the Whigs held a meeting, and challenged the Democrats to a joint debate. The challenge was accepted, and Douglas, Lamborn, Calhoun, and Jesse

B. Thomas were selected by the Democrats, Logan, Baker, Browning, and Lincoln were selected by the Whigs. Such intellectual giants of course drew a crowded house. The debate took place in the Presbyterian church, and lasted for eight nights, each speaker taking one night. Like true knights they came to fight in intellectual armor clad. They all stood high, and each had his followers, adherents, and admirers. This was in January, 1840.

Lincoln's speech was published as a campaign document. The conclusion of that speech, as an evidence of his style at that early day is, I think, worth repeating here:

"If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of its Divine Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world beside, and I standing up boldly and alone, hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before heaven and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fealty to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love. And who, that thinks with me, will not fearlessly adopt the oath I take! Let none falter who thinks he is right, and we may succeed. But if, after all, we shall fail, be it so; we still have the proud consolation of saying to our consciences, and to the departed shade of our country's freedom, that the cause approved of our judgments and adored of our hearts we never faltered in defending."

Mr. Lincoln delivered this speech without manuscript or notes. It filled seven columns in the Sangamon Journal, and was pronounced by all who heard it as exactly what he had said. He had a wonderful faculty in that way. He might be writing an important document, be interrupted in the midst of a sentence, turn his attention to other matters entirely foreign to the subject on which he was engaged, and take up his pen and begin where he left off without reading the previous part of the sentence. He could grasp, exhaust, and quit any subject with more facility than any man I have ever seen or heard of.

Lincoln had the tenderest heart for any one in distress, whether man, beast, or bird. Many of the gentle and touching sympathies of his nature, which flowered so frequently and beautifully in the humble citizen at home, fruited in the sunlight of the world when he had power and place. He carried from his home on the prairies to Washington the same gentleness of disposition and kindness of heart. Six gentlemen, I being one, Lincoln, Baker, Hardin, and others were riding along a country road. We were strung along the road two and two together. We were passing through a thicket of wild plum and crab-apple trees. A violent wind-storm had just occurred. Lincoln and Hardin were behind. There were two young birds by the roadside too young to fly. They had been blown from the nest by the storm. The old bird was fluttering about and wailing as a mother ever does for her babes. Lincoln

stopped, hitched his horse, caught the birds, hunted the nest and placed them in it. The rest of us rode on to a creek, and while our horses were drinking Hardin rode up. "Where is Lincoln," said one? "Oh, when I saw him last he had two little birds in his hand hunting for their nest." In perhaps an hour he came. They laughed at him. He said with much emphasis, "Gentlemen, you may laugh, but I could not have slept well to-night, if I had not saved those birds. Their cries would have rung in my ears." This is one of the flowers of his prairie life. Now for the fruit.

The last time I saw him was about two weeks before his assassination. He sent me word by my brother James, then in his Cabinet, that he desired to see me before I went home. I went into his office about eleven o'clock. He looked jaded and weary. I staid in the room until his hour for callers was over; he ordered the door closed, and, looking over to where I was sitting, asked me draw up my chair. But instead of being alone, as he supposed, in the opposite direction from where I sat, and across the fire-place from him, sat two humble-looking women. Seeing them there seemed to provoke him, and he said, "Well, ladies, what can I do for you?" One was an old woman, the other young. They both commenced talking at once. The President soon comprehended them. "I suppose," said he, "that your son and your husband are in prison for resisting the draft in Western Pennsylvania. Where is your petition?" The old lady replied, "Mr. Lincoln, I've got no petition; I

went to a lawyer to get one drawn, and I had not the money to pay him and come here too; so, I thought I would just come and ask you to let me have my boy." "And it's your husband you want," said he, turning to the young woman? "Yes," said she.

He rung his bell and called his servant, and bade him to go and tell Gen. Dana to bring him the list of prisoners for resisting the draft in Western Pennsylvania.

The General soon came, bringing a package of papers. The President opened it, and, counting the names, said, "General, there are twenty-seven of these men. Is there any difference in degree of their guilt?" "No," said the General, "It is a bad case, and a merciful finding." "Well," said the President, looking out of the window and seemingly talking to himself, "these poor fellows have, I think, suffered enough; they have been in prison fifteen months. I have been thinking so for some time, and have so said to Stanton, and he always threatened to resign if they are released. But he has said so about other matters, and never did. So now, while I have the paper in my hand, I will turn out the flock." So he wrote, "Let the prisoners named in the within paper be discharged," and signed it. The General made his bow and left. Then, turning to the ladies, he said, "Now ladies, you can go. Your son, madam, and your husband, madam, is free."

The young woman ran across to him and began to kneel. He took her by the elbow and said, impatiently, "Get up, get up; none of this." But the old woman

walked to him, wiping with her apron the tears that were coursing down her cheeks. She gave him her hand, and looking into his face said, "Good-bye, Mr. Lincoln, we will never meet again till we meet in Heaven." A change came over his sad and weary face. He clasped her hand in both of his, and followed her to the door, saying as he went, "With all that I have to cross me here, I am afraid that I will never get there; but your wish that you will meet me there has fully paid for all I have done for you."

We were then alone. He drew his chair to the fire and said, "Speed, I am a little alarmed about myself; just feel my hand." It was cold and clammy.

He pulled off his boots, and, putting his feet to the fire, the heat made them steam. I said overwork was producing nervousness. "No," said he, "I am not tired." I said, "Such a scene as I have just witnessed is enough to make you nervous." "How much you are mistaken," said he; "I have made two people happy to-day; I have given a mother her son, and a wife her husband. That young woman is a counterfeit, but the old woman is a true mother."

This is the fruit of the flower we saw bloom in the incident of the birds.

Mr. Lincoln was a cool, brave man. His physical courage was never questioned. His moral courage was grand. He was cautious about expressing himself against public sentiment when it would do no good; but when it became necessary he did so with emphasis, earnestness, and force.

When the Whig party struck its colors, he had to choose between the Republican and Democratic parties. He allied himself with the Republican. Many of his old Whig friends went with the Democrats. He called a meeting and made a speech, which for power and beauty his friends say was never excelled.

The Whigs who had honored him were more bitter toward him than the Democrats. By this speech all personal asperities were quieted. The contest rose from the low level of personal abuse to the high plane of intellectual combat. It was really almost impossible to have a personal controversy with him. These were some of the flowers that bloomed on the prairie. As President he had no personal controversies.

On one occasion, when Kentucky was overrun, Nelson had been beaten in battle near Richmond, and lay wounded in Cincinnati. Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were alarmed, and Kentucky aroused. A self constituted committee of distinguished gentlemen determined to go and advise with the President as to what was best to be done. I happened to be present at the interview. The committee was composed of able and distinguished men. Senator Lane opened for Indiana, Garret Davis followed for Kentucky, and other gentlemen for Ohio and Illinois. They all had complaints to make of the conduct of the war in the West. Like the expression in the Prayer-book, the Government was "doing every thing it ought not to do, and leaving undone every thing it ought to do."

The President sat on a revolving chair, looking at every one till they were all done. I never saw him exhibit more tact or talent than he did on this occasion. He said, "Now, gentlemen, I am going to make you a curious kind of a speech. I announce to you that I am not going to do one single thing that any one of you has asked me to do. But it is due to myself and to you that I should give my reasons." He then from his seat answered each man, taking them in the order in which they spoke, never forgetting a point that any one had made. When he was done, he rose from his chair and said, "Judge List, this reminds me of an anecdote which I heard a son of yours tell in Burlington in Iowa. He was trying to enforce upon his hearers the truth of the old adage that three moves is worse than a fire. As an illustration he gave an account of a family who started from Western Pennsylvania, pretty well off in this world's goods when they started. But they moved and moved, having less and less every time they moved, till after a while they could carry every thing in one wagon. He said that the chickens of the family got so used to being moved, that whenever they saw the wagon sheets brought out they laid themselves on their backs and crossed their legs, ready to be tied. Now, gentlemen, if I were to listen to every committee that comes in at that door, I had just as well cross my hands and let you tie me. Nevertheless I am glad to see you." He left him in good humor, and all were satisfied. The patience, kindness, and tact he showed on this occasion was another fruit of the prairie flower.

Lincoln was fond of anecdotes, and told them well. It was a great mental relief to him. All great thinkers must have mental relaxation. He did not know one card from another, therefore could not play. He never drank, and hated low company. Fault has been found by some fastidious persons with his habit of story-telling—in other words, with his method of illustration by means of anecdote. It is said this was undignified. A fable, a parable, or an anecdote, is nothing more than illustrating a real case by an imaginary one. A positive statement embraces but one case, while a fable, a parable, or an anecdote may cover a whole class of cases.

Take, for instance, his conversation with W. C. Reeves, of Virginia, whom he greatly admired. Reeves came with other gentlemen from Richmond soon after his inauguration. A convention was in session in Richmond to decide whether Virginia would go out or stay in the Union. Mr. Reeves was a Union man, and proceeded to advise the President. His advice was, to surrender Forts Sumpter and Pickens, and all the property of the Government in the Southern States. Mr. Lincoln asked him if he remembered the fable of the Lion and the Woodsman's Daughter. Mr. Reeves said that he did not. Æsop, said the President, reports that a lion was very much in love with a woodsman's daughter. The fair maid, afraid to say no, referred him to her father. The lion applied for the girl. The father replied, your teeth are too long. The lion went to a dentist and had them extracted. Returning, he asked for his bride.

No, said the woodsman, your claws are too long. Going back to the dentist, he had them drawn. Then, returning to claim his bride, the woodsman, seeing that he was disarmed, beat out his brains. "May it not be so," said Mr. Lincoln, "with me, if I give up all that is asked."

I have often been asked what were Mr. Lincoln's religious opinions. When I knew him, in early life, he was a skeptic. He had tried hard to be a believer, but his reason could not grasp and solve the great problem of redemption as taught. He was very cautious never to give expression to any thought or sentiment that would grate harshly upon a Christian's ear. For a sincere Christian he had great respect. He often said that the most ambitious man might live to see every hope fail; but, no Christian could live to see his fail, because fulfillment could only come when life ended. But this was a subject we never discussed. The only evidence I have of any change, was in the summer before he was killed. I was invited out to the Soldier's Home to spend the night. As I entered the room, near night, he was sitting near a window intently reading his Bible. Approaching him I said, "I am glad to see you so profitably engaged." "Yes" said he, "I am profitably engaged." "Well," said I, "If you have recovered from your skepticism, I am sorry to say that I have not." Looking me earnestly in the face, and placing his hand on my shoulder, he said, "You are wrong Speed, take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the bal-

ance on faith, and you will live and die a happier and better man."

I am indebted for the following to Judge Gillespie, one of Mr. Lincoln's most trusted and intimate friends, who occasionally went to Washington to see him. Wanting no office, he was always welcome. The Judge says, Mr. Lincoln once said to me that he could never reconcile the prescience of the Deity with the uncertainty of events. But he thought it would be profitless to teach his views.

The Judge adds, I asked him once what was to be done with the South after the rebellion was put down. He said some thought their heads ought to come off; but, said he, if it was left to me, I could not tell where to draw the line between those whose heads should come off, and those whose heads should stay on. He said that he had recently been reading the history of the rebellion of Absalom, and that he inclined to adopt the views of David. Said he, "When David was fleeing from Jerusalem Shimei cursed him. After the rebellion was put down Shimei craved a pardon. Abishai, David's nephew, the son of Zeruiah, David's sister, said, 'This man ought not to be pardoned, because he cursed the Lord's anointed.' David said, 'What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be adversaries unto me. Know ye that not a man shall be put to death in Israel.'"

This was like his anecdotes, and was illustrative of what he thought would come about. He would be

pressed to put men to death because they had rebelled. But, like David, he intended to say, "Know ye that not a man shall be put to death in Israel."

Mr. Lincoln's person was ungainly. He was six feet four inches in height; a little stooped in the shoulders; his legs and arms were long; his feet and hands large; his forehead was high. His head was over the average size. His eyes were gray. His face and forehead were wrinkled even in his youth. They deepened in age, "as streams their channels deeper wear." Generally he was a very sad man, and his countenance indicated it. But when he warmed up all sadness vanished, his face was radiant and glowing, and almost gave expression to his thoughts before his tongue could utter them. If I was asked what it was that threw such charm around him, I would say that it was his perfect naturalness. He could act no part but his own. He copied no one either in manner or style. His style was more florid in the published speeches of his early life than his later productions.

I wish here to record what I heard Senator Sumner say of him and of his style:

He said "He had read with great interest, all of Lincoln's published speeches, and particularly the volume of debates with Douglas. That while there is no speech in that book artistic from its base to summit, there is no speech of his in which you will not find gems of English excelled by none. But," said he, "of all the speeches he ever read, in any language, by any man

living or dead, he thought Lincoln's Gettysburg speech was the greatest." Lincoln said, "The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it never can forget what they did here." Sumner said "the speech would live when the memory of the battle would be lost, or only be remembered because of the speech."

I have often thought of the characters of the two great rivals, Lincoln and Douglas. They seemed to have been pitted against each other from 1836 till Lincoln reached the Presidency. They were the respective leaders of their parties in the State. They were as opposite in character as they were unlike in their persons. Lincoln was long and ungainly. Douglas, short and compact. Douglas, in all elections, was the moving spirit in the conduct and management of an election, he was not content without a blind submission to himself. He could not tolerate opposition to his will within his party organization. He held the reins and controlled the movement of the Democratic chariot. With a large State majority, with many able and ambitious men in it, he stepped to the front in his youth and held it till his death.

Mr. Lincoln, on the other hand, shrank from any controversy with his friends. Being in a minority in the State he was forced to the front, because his friends thought he was the only man with whom they could win. In a canvass his friends had to do all the management. He knew nothing of how to reach the people except by addressing their reason. If the situation had

been reversed, Lincoln representing the majority, and Douglas the minority, I think it most likely Lincoln would never have had place. He had no heart for a fight with friends.

Mr. Lincoln had a wonderful power for entertaining and amusing all classes and grades of society.

As an evidence of his power of entertainment, I relate an incident I got from Judge Gillespie, who got it from Judge Peck, who was one of the party. In 1843, when Mr. Van Buren and Commodore Paulding visited the West, and gave out that they would reach Springfield a certain day, but their friends knew from the condition of the roads that their expectations could not be realized, a party was formed, and Lincoln, though not of their politics, was pressed into service. They met Van Buren and his party at Rochester, in Sangamon County, in an old barn of a hotel. Lincoln was charged to do his best to entertain the distinguished guests. Well did he do his part. Lincoln soon got under way and kept the company convulsed with laughter till the small hours of the night. Mr. Van Buren stayed some days in Springfield, and repeatedly said he never spent so agreeable a night in his life. He complained that his sides were sore with laughter, and to more than one predicted for that young man a bright and brilliant future.

His fondness for his step-mother and his watchful care over her after the death of his father deserves notice. He could not bear to have any thing said by any one against her. Not a great while before his death he was direct-

ing a letter to her, and told me that he was discharging a most agreeable duty. He then spoke of his affection for her and her kindness to him. He said he could not bear to leave the State for four years without going to see her. A few days before he left home he visited her, and staid all night. In the morning, as he bade her good-bye, she looked at him and said, "Good-bye, Abraham; I shall never see you again, you will never come back alive." The earnestness of her look he said sometimes haunted him. Alas! how true the prediction.

Lincoln in all his soul loved peace and avoided strife. He had often calmed and quieted the angry passions of men in his own way, and in his own State and county. For peace he would sacrifice all save honor. To have avoided war he would have yielded much. But it was impossible for him to have surrendered his honor or tarnished his fame by being faithless to the great trust imposed upon him by his election to the Presidency. The conclusion of his first inaugural reflects his feelings as a mirror:

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You can have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Goverment, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect, and defend it. I am loath to close. We are not enemies but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break

our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Thus he pleaded for peace on the very threshold of his administration. But war came—he kept his oath to preserve, protect, and defend. In his last inaugural, when he could almost see the end of the rebellion, he says, "With charity for all, with malice toward none, let us pursue the right as God has given us the light to see the right." These sentiments were the fruiting of the sweet flowers that bloomed on the prairie.

Mr. Lincoln was a man of great common sense. He was a common man expanded into giant proportions; well acquainted with the people, he placed his hand on the beating pulse of the Nation, judged of its disease, and was ever ready with a remedy. He had an abiding faith in the good sense and intuitions of the people. Wendell Phillips aptly described him as the Indian hunter, who lays his ear to the ground and listens for the tramp of the coming millions.

I have often been asked where Lincoln got his style. His father had but few books. The Bible, Esop's Fables, Weems's Life of Washington, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. These he almost committed to memory. From these I suppose he got his style. His mind was not quick, but solid and retentive. It was like polished

steel, a mark once made upon it was never erased. His memory of events, of facts, dates, faces, and names, surprised every one.

In the winter of 1841 a gloom came over him till his friends were alarmed for his life. Though a member of the legislature he rarely attended its sessions. In his deepest gloom, and when I told him he would die unless he rallied, he said, "I am not afraid, and would be more than willing. But I have an irrepressible desire to live till I can be assured that the world is a little better for my having lived in it." A noble and commendable ambition. It is for posterity to say whether his ambition was gratified. Four millions of slaves were made freemen by his proclamation, and the principle engrafted in the Constitution of his country, that, for all time, men and women shall not be bought and sold. If it be permitted him to look back upon the land of his love, how gratified he must be to see that no party in this broad land opposes the great principles he advocated and established. Even now the mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over the land, is swelling the chorus of the Union, and all hearts are touched by the better angels of our nature.

In early summer of 1841 Mr. Lincoln came to Kentucky and spent several months at Farmington, the home of my mother, near this city. On his return to Illinois, thinking that some recognition of the kindness shown him was due, he wrote a letter to my sister, Miss

Mary Speed, in which he gives among other things an account of his trip on a steamboat from Louisville to St. Louis, and though the letter has been published I will here give a portion of it.

The scene he describes bears so intimate a relation to his after-life, I think it probable that it may be considered as concentrating his opposition to slavery. He says, "A fine example was presented on board the boat for contemplating the effect of condition upon human happiness. A gentleman had purchased twelve negroes in different parts of Kentucky, and was taking them to a farm in the South. They were chained six and six together, a small iron clevis was around the left wrist of each, and this fastened to the main chain by a shorter at a convenient distance from the others, so that the negroes were strung together precisely like so many fish upon a trot-line. In this condition they were being separated forever from the scenes of their childhood, their friends, their fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and many of them from their wives and children, and going into perpetual slavery, where the lash of the master is proverbially more ruthless than any where else; and yet amid all these distressing circumstances, as we would think them, they were the most cheerful and apparently happy people on board. One, whose offense for which he was sold was an over-fondness for his wife, played the fiddle almost continually, and others danced, sung, cracked jokes, and played various games with cards from day to day. How true it is that 'God tempers the

wind to the shorn lamb,' or, in other words, that he renders the worst of human conditions tolerable, while he permits the best to be nothing better than tolerable."

With the tender, sympathetic nature such as his was—when the question came, should this institution be carried into the Territories or should its boundaries be circumscribed—is it a wonder that he arrayed himself against its extension? or that, in the times when the Southern States claimed the right to secede because the institution was in danger, and when they made the slaves, not soldiers, but producers for their soldiers, he was more than willing to strike slavery dead? It was one of the means in his hands for putting down the rebellion. He used it. Mankind will say whether he was right or wrong. He held the thunderbolt in his hand, but paused for one hundred days before he hurled it. Then he would not have taken it back if he could, and could not if he would.

I have alluded to Mr. Lincoln's firmness. Perhaps in America no such contest has ever taken place as that between Lincoln and Douglas. Each was the chosen leader of his respective party. Each had been nominated by conventions as candidate for the United States Senate. They were to stump the State as the chosen representatives of the principles of their respective parties. Mr. Lincoln, after accepting the nomination, was to make his opening speech, which he did to a crowded house in Springfield on the 17th of June, 1858. Before he delivered it he called a council of his friends, twelve

in number, and read it slowly and deliberately to them. In that speech he says, "'A house divided against itself can not stand.' I believe this Government can not endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect to see the house fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." Eleven of his friends objected to this part of it and strenuously urged him to leave it out. Mr. Lincoln sat still a moment, then, rising, strode rapidly up and down the room and said, "Gentlemen, I have thought much upon this, and it must remain. If it must be that I go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to truth. This nation can not live on injustice—a house divided against itself can not stand. I say it again, and again."

He here evinced a firmness where principle was involved, but any of those present could have controlled him in the conduct and management of the campaign. In the management of the fight he would have nothing to do, but in the principles upon which he would make it he would be supreme.

No better evidence of the affection of the American people could be given than has been shown in the erection of the monument to his memory at Springfield at a cost of near $200,000. $61,500 was contributed by the States of Illinois, Missouri, New York, and Nevada. The balance came into the treasury of the Monumental Association without effort. The Association is out of debt, with sufficient means in the treasury to take care of the

grounds and keep watch over the monument and to show to pilgrims now daily visiting it. It stands upon a lot of seven acres, donated by the Oak Ridge Cemetery.

It was my good fortune to be present at the unvailing of the statue (which, by the way, is the best likeness of him I had ever seen). The statue is ten feet high, but stands on a pedestal so high that from the ground it does not appear to be more than life size. In his right hand is the scroll of his emancipation with the pen he used in affixing his name to it. At his feet is the American Coat of Arms. The laurel, the emblem of peace, which was tendered to his foes in his first inaugural and rejected, is in the talons of the eagle; while the proud bird has a broken chain in her beak, representing the broken chain of slavery. On either side of him are bronze groups of the army and navy, the instruments to preserve the Government and put down the rebellion.

It was my good fortune to witness the unvailing of the statue. It was draped with the American flag. As the orator, Gov. Oglesby, closed his oration, he turned and, pointing to the statue, said, "Behold the image of the man." The vail was then withdrawn. Shout after shout rent the air from that vast crowd; but far more touching and tender was it there, among his friends and neighbors, to see tears stream from the eyes of many.

I have given some of my reminiscences in the life of Abraham Lincoln. As President his acts stand before the world, and by them he will be judged; as a man, honest, true, upright, and just, he lived and died.

NOTES, REMINISCENCES, AND REFLECTIONS

OF MY

TRIP TO THE PACIFIC COAST IN 1876.

I left Louisville May 9, 1876, for the Pacific Coast, with my wife and my sister, Mrs. Breckinridge.

It is useless to dwell upon the trip from here to Chicago, and thence due west to Omaha. It is generally fine rolling prairie skirted with timber, as you cross the various streams through the great States of Illinois and Iowa. After crossing the Missouri River at Omaha, you go several hundred miles through Nebraska, with the same undulating prairie and ordinary farm-houses, full granaries, and great herds of cattle, sheep, horses, etc., indicative of a prosperous and growing country. Then begins the desert of seven hundred miles, on which nothing seems to grow but the sage bush. There are no habitations for man except at the points where the railroad employees have built huts for their convenience and eating-stations for the passengers. These always include grog-shops and "Bourbon" whisky, a tablespoonful of which will nearly kill a man.

It is amusing to see what a small thing will attract the attention of a whole train in this lonely and vast desert. The Pacific road runs for several hundred miles along and in sight of the old Mormon trail, or the overland

route to California, now used by emigrants to the Black Hills, with the old ox and horse teams, with their white wagon-sheets, and the usual accompaniment of women, white-haired little children, dogs, cows, horses, etc. Such things we would not notice at home, but on the plains they arrest the attention of all. Men and women will cease to look upon the snow-clad mountains in the distance, where the snow on the mountains and the white clouds in the sky seem to meet and mingle so that you can scarcely tell the one from the other, to gaze at an emigrant train.

In this vast desert there is a great city, about twenty miles in length, how wide we do not know. So numerous are its inhabitants that no census has ever been taken, or ever can be taken of its population. They have none of the vices or virtues of our advanced civilization—no churches, no theaters, no coffee-houses, no lager-beer saloons, no plumed hearses, nor big funerals, no fashionable cemetery, no doctors, nor lawyers, nor preachers, no church quarrels, no Sabbath-schools, no mayor, or common council, no paid police, no jail, no paved streets, nor city taxes, no politicians, no elections. None of its citizens carry concealed weapons. They care nothing for mutations of trade, the price of stocks or gold, or who is president. They know nothing of who was president from Washington to Hayes. Nothing of the great rebellion. Blessed ignorance!

This great city is known as prairie-dog city. The dogs build in the ground where they live. As the train

passes by they come out of their holes, as loungers in others villages do, to gaze at the passing train. In stature they are about the size of a squirrel, with sharp noses, small ears and bushy tails. This is the city of the desert.

With this desert begins the ascent to the Rocky Mountains. So gradual is the ascent (about seventy feet to the mile) that you seem to be on a level plain till you reach the top.

Having passed through the ascent you reach Sherman, said to be the highest point on the railroad to San Francisco, and the highest railroad point in the world.

You may imagine our surprise when on the top of the Rocky Mountains. Instead of finding ourselves on a narrow backbone or ridge, as we had imagined, with hardly enough level land for lovers to stand upon without the support of each other's arms, we were in the midst of a vast plain, thousands of miles in length north and south, and hundreds of miles in width east and west. It is a great basin of wet, level prairie. It is like a waiter with a rim of snow clad mountains around it. In this basin are collected the waters which go in part to make the great rivers of the continent. Those flowing east go to swell the waters of the Missouri and Mississippi, finding their grave in the Atlantic Ocean, through the Gulf of Mexico. Those flowing west go to swell the waters of the Colorado, and find their grave in the Pacific Ocean, through the Gulf of California.

I could but think, as I saw these infant streams on

this vast plain, winding their small tortuous ways east and west, how our course of life, from infancy to old age, was like unto theirs. They played together on this great plain as did we in our early years upon the small school-grounds. They separate, one going east and the other west. So do we. They go leaping and laughing down the mountain side, gay and sparkling in their youth. So do we. They soon lose their identity in the great rivers they join, and we ours in the great throng of the world that we join. They find their graves in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, far apart, and we ours in the great ocean of eternity, perhaps much further divided.

Passing over this basin you come to the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, where the scenery becomes grand. Here you see Castle Rock, Pulpit Rock, and other scenery, each object having some fancied resemblance to the thing from which it takes its name. As the road winds around the foot of the mountain, and along the banks of Bear River, you come to a gorge in the mountain, through which the river flows at a fall of about six hundred feet to the mile. The place is called Hell Gate.

I could but think that, if it was really the gate to that dreadfully hot place, how refreshing that *cold, cold* water would be to the parched tongue of many a poor suffering sinner.

Arrived at Ogden, the terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad; changed cars for Salt Lake City, forty miles

south, where we arrived Saturday night, May 13th, having traveled two thousand miles, and only two hours behind time. On Sabbath morning went to the M. E. Church, a church built by the Church Extension Society of that denomination, through the efforts and agency of Chaplain McCabe. It is a solid and beautiful structure, larger than any Methodist church in this city. It has a large organ, and is capable of seating twelve hundred people. It was a very rainy day. The congregation numbered only thirty-five, ourselves included. In the afternoon we went to the Mormon Tabernacle. It is capable of seating eight thousand people. We heard a sermon on the terrors of the law. The preacher proved, apparently to his own satisfaction, that the coming of Joe Smith was foretold by John, in his writings from the Island of Patmos, and that he had suffered and died as all other martyrs in the cause of truth have suffered and died.

Monday we called on Mayor Little, to whom we had letters of introduction. We found him a very agreeable and intelligent gentleman. He was a nephew of Brigham Young. He regretted very much that his family carriage was broken, or Mrs. Little would call upon the ladies. He did not say which Mrs. Little would have done the calling. At one o'clock he called for me with a 2:50 span of horses, and drove me up the cañon back of the city, where they harness the wild and rushing water of the mountain gorge and tame it to man's use. Then he drove me to all the principal points of interest

in and around the city, pointing out the harems of Brigham Young, his extensive grounds, and the houses erected for his *married* children, twenty-one in number. Being his guest, I could not discuss the subject, ever uppermost in my mind—polygamy. But I could plainly see that he had but little patience with a poor one-wifed man like myself.

The city is on a plain at the foot of a mountain range, and twelve miles distant from the great Salt Lake. It has a population of twenty-five thousand; five thousand gentiles and twenty thousand Mormons. Its streets are all one hundred and thirty-five feet wide, wider than our Broadway. It is watered from the cañon, which I have mentioned, east of the city. So large is the supply of water, that in every street and on each side of every street, between the side-walks and the street, they have a stream of pure snow-water about eighteen inches wide and nine inches deep, limpid, cool, fresh, and ever flowing at a fall of seventy feet to the mile.

Next day took the cars for Great Salt Lake. It is one hundred miles long and fifty miles wide. In it are several large islands of solid rock, unfit for the habitation of man or beast. There are mountains in the midst of this inland sea. The water of the lake is thirty-three per cent more salt than that of the ocean. Nothing can live in it. It is fed by two large fresh-water rivers and innumerable small streams of fresh water. It has no outlet to the ocean, known to man. Two small steamers do a thriving business around the lake. The valleys

are fertile, and the mountains abound in silver, lead, and gold. We saw six cars containing eight tons each of silver and lead, which we were told was about the average daily shipment over that one road.

Of these people and the Mormon civilization, I must say it is wonderful. They have their schools, banks, merchants, mechanics, publishing houses, newspapers, grog-shops, billiard-saloons, theaters, street railroads, comfortable houses, and well-stocked farms, all evidencing great advances for so new a country. Another evidence of their advanced civilization, they have had a split in their church and a great church quarrel. You have nothing of that kind here.

The ladies of our party, in the sympathy of their natures, were much concerned for the poor women, many of whom had to be content to be wife No. 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., up to 30 or 40, of one man, not pitying at all the poor men, who were too much married. In riding upon the street cars, they found two women, who acknowledged themselves to be the wives of one husband. The deluded things, they said, they dared to be happy.

Hume says that, at the advent of John Knox into Scotland, bull-baiting was fashionable, amused the people and made them laugh. The old Presbyterians of that day did not object so much to the cruelty of the sport as to seeing the people laugh; so with our ladies as to these women. Now, adieu to Salt Lake City.

From Salt Lake to San Francisco is by rail. Located at the Palace Hotel, said to be the largest and finest

in the world. Many friends called, and, though far from home, we did not feel as though we were among strangers.

Many invitations to dine and to ride. But our ladies did not come to see cities, or eat dinners, or take drives. They came to see nature. Besides, poor things, "They had nothing to wear." While I would gladly have stayed a month, for both profit and pleasure, I had to do their bidding abroad, as I do at home. No declaration of independence will stand against a woman's will, unless you are prepared to fight for it longer than our forefathers did to make their Declaration good. As we find it in Louisville it is here.

Left San Francisco May 21st for Santa Cruz. This is a town of six thousand inhabitants, one hundred and fifty miles south of San Francisco by rail and on the Pacific. On the day after our arrival a lunch was prepared, and an excursion tendered us up the cañon back of the city, on a narrow-gauge road, to the big trees (the red-wood of the Pacific). Accepting it, we saw many things that were pleasing, and much that was frightful. The narrow little road spanned chasms several hundred feet deep, on trestle work, and hugged the mountain side five hundred feet above the level below.

Here we saw a family living in a hollow tree, with beds, bedding, and all the paraphernalia of house-keeping. They cooked, however, out of doors. In Santa Cruz was the finest floral display we saw in California. Here the lots are generally large, but whether large or

small, are all well set with flowers. The fuchsia and geranium, the cloth of gold and lamark roses grow in great luxuriance and wild profusion. The people are all polite to tourists.

The grandest floral display I have ever seen was in an old Spanish orchard, lying in the suburbs of the town. About fifty apple trees as large as our largest, and said to be one hundred years old, were there. The cloth of gold and lamark roses, beautiful climbers, had climbed up the bodies of the trees, and wound themselves around and through the branches, till the trees seemed to have fruited in rich clusters of flowers, about eight or ten in a cluster. The largest sized half-blown roses would about fill an ordinary glass tumbler.

At Santa Cruz is the great sugar refinery, where they make sugar, from beets raised in the neighborhood, for the whole coast. Here too are the powder mills for the coast. It is a great timber market. Here you have a grand view of the Pacific ocean, with a long beach for driving and bathing. The star-fish, the rock borer, and the sea fern are among the rare curiosities.

Leaving Santa Cruz, we took the stage across the shore mountains, a range about two thousand five hundred feet high, running near the ocean. The road is just wide enough for the stage coach, with occasional turn-outs for two coaches to pass. Imagine yourself on a narrow veranda without a railing, hung on the side of the mountain. Looking downward and upward, you are one thousand feet from the bottom below, and one thou-

sand five hundred feet below the top of the mountain above. On the summit of the range lives Mountain Charlie, an old settler, who has made quite a fortune by grazing sheep and cattle. His person is all disfigured by his early fights with the grizzly bear. A few years ago he thought he would go down to Santa Cruz to educate his children, but soon returned to his mountain home because his children could not walk straight on level ground. These hills are very fertile. The timber is all red-wood; and for the undergrowth, the wild azalia, millions of acres, and the alder tree, at that time all in full bloom. Here, too, is the soap-plant, which the inhabitants use for washing their persons and clothes. From the dust we encountered it would seem Nature, in her beneficence, has produced the plant just where it is most needed.

May 27th, back in San Francisco again, at the Palace Hotel. Seven miles out from the city, we went to see the sea lions at the Cliff House. They are amphibious, and bark like a dog; they weigh from four hundred to eight hundred pounds. There is a clump of island rocks about one hundred yards from the shore, some sixty feet high, upon which these sea lions are ever climbing to sun themselves, and plunging from the top of the rocks into the deep sea. The largest of these animals is called Ben Butler. We rode in a carriage through the park, and back through the cemetery. The cemetery abounds in lying epitaphs, as all others do. If there ever was an unkind husband or a scolding wife, they were never buried in a fashionable cemetery, that is, if

you believe the writing on their tombs, as I suppose in charity you do.

I spent the next two days in looking at the city and its surging crowds; looking into its trade and commerce as well as I could in so short a time. California Street is the chief object of attraction. Upon this street are the two Board of Trade halls, both larger than any hall we have in Louisville.

Their stocks are sold at auction, and millions change hands in a day. The streets and pavements are lined with an eager and anxious crowd, all buying and selling on margins or for cash, each hoping, like the gambler, for some quick return and great profit. The crowd is about the same each and every day, and composed of all classes and grades of society. The rich banker, the lawyer, the doctor, the preacher, the gambler, the poor laborer, the fashionable ladies of the city, and the poor chambermaid, all meet here, and for a time are on a level. Thus it goes from day to day; if one fall or a thousand fall, it matters not, new recruits fill the broken ranks, and the battle goes bravely on. They all fight bravely till the ammunition of the pocket gives out, then they give way to die, or to recruit their strength by getting new ammunition for the fray.

May 31st. Gen. Myer placed at our command a Government vessel, to take us around the Bay of San Francisco. This courtesy was due to a letter from Gen. Sherman, introducing and commending us to the attention of all United States officers in command on the Pacific Coast.

"Prophets are never without honor save in their own country." I was not inclined to accept the invitation, but our friend, Major Caperton, said that we might stay there for twenty years and not have such another opportunity to see the bay. We saw the bay, and visited its islands, Alcatras and Angels, and viewed the Golden Gate. At Alcatras they gave us a dress parade, and every where we were treated with marked attention. In this bay all the navies of the world could ride with ease, and so well is it fortified that none could enter it without our permission.

Left in the evening for the Yosemite Valley, distant about three hundred and fifty miles southeast from San Francisco, two hundred and fifty-four miles by rail, two hundred and ninety-six miles by stage. Took stage at Merced, and stopped two nights and one day at Clark's Tavern in the mountains, about seven miles from the big trees. These are reached by a trail on the side of the mountain, about eighteen inches wide, traveling on mustang ponies. All of our party went except myself and wife. My sister, a woman of sixty-five, encountered the ride, and came in as fresh as a girl of sixteen. The air is so pure and bracing that you do not become fatigued as we do here. Next morning we took the stage for the Yosemite Valley, over the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada, where we arrived to a late dinner Saturday evening.

Never spent so reverential a Sabbath in my life. In the morning went to Mirror Lake, at the head of the

valley, where we had a sermon, prayer, and singing by Mr. Cutter of our party. In the evening and by moonlight we went to see a small lake in the vicinity of the hotel, where you see the falls, the trees, the flowers, the moon and stars, all mirrored in the placid lake. Some agreeable young ladies sang and recited some pieces of poetry. They challenged me, and I gave them the following, by George D. Prentice:

A NIGHT OF BEAUTY.

'T is a sweet scene. 'Mid shadows dim
  The mighty river wanders by,
And on its calm, unruffled brim,
  So soft the bright star-shadows lie,
'T would seem as if the night-wind's plume
Had swept through woods of tropic bloom,
And shaken down their blossoms white
To float upon the waves to-night.

And see! as soars the moon aloft,
  Her yellow beams come through the air
So mild, so beautifully soft,
  That wave and wood seemed stirred with prayer:
And the pure spirit, as it kneels
At Nature's holy altar, feels
Religion's self come stealing by
In every beam that cleaves the sky.

The valley is about ten miles long and one mile wide. The Merced River flows through it, about its middle. It is from one hundred to two hundred feet wide and ten feet deep. It enters the valley over two falls, called Vernal and Nevada, one seven hundred feet and the other five hundred feet, while our great Niagara is only one hundred and sixty feet. The mountains around the

falls vary in height from twenty-two hundred to fifty-five hundred feet above the level of the valley. Over these mountains, which make the walls to the valley, come rushing streams of various sizes, from the melted snow on the still higher mountains around and above. You must remember that these tall mountains are mere foot-hills to the great Sierra Nevada.

The grandest of these falls is called the Yosemite. It falls sixteen hundred feet, from the top of the mountain till it strikes a shoulder in the rocks, where by friction it has made a lake forty feet deep and covering an area of over ten acres. From this lake it falls six hundred feet to the plain below. The water looks like soap-suds or whipped cream.

There are various others falls of smaller size, such as Ribbon, because the waters seem to divide as they descend and look like various colored ribbons; the Rainbow Fall, so called because a rainbow is always there, made by the sunlight and the mist from the fall; the Bridal-vail, because of the mist that envelops the fall like a vail.

On all the mountain sides are narrow trails over which people go on mustang ponies and mules to see the various sights around and above. None of our party went. Having come so far for pleasure, I did not feel like making myself miserable. I have a poor head for looking over a precipice.

June 8th. Left the valley by another route than the one we came, called the Calaveras route, because of the

big trees of that name in a grove on this route. The celebrated stump, one hundred and thirty-two feet in circumference, on which they dance, hold meetings, and preach to hundreds of people comfortably seated on benches upon it, is in a grove on this route. Here too is the fallen tree through the hollow of which a stage coach can drive.

I well remember the first time I ever heard of these trees. The scene was a country tavern by the road-side, in Illinois, on a cold fall night by a big log-fire. A young man had gone from Illinois to California and returned. He was telling about these trees and the immense growth of vegetables there. Among other things, he said that an emigrant had gone there with some turnip seed, which he had planted. That they grew so large that a flock of twelve sheep ate through the rind of one turnip, ate out the inside, and wintered in the rind. Another fellow, evidently a doubting Thomas, on the opposite side of the hearth, said that he had been to the Iron Mountain in Missouri. It was a mile high, six miles long, solid iron, *wrought iron at that;* that, when he left there, they were building a kettle so large that the smiths on one side could not hear the hammers of those riveting on the other side. "What on the yearth were they building such a kettle as that for?" inquired the California man. "Well," replied the doubting Thomas, "they had heern tell ot them ar' turnips of your'n, and they were jest fixin to bile a mess ov 'em."

On this route you pass through Fremont's Mariposa claim, once so celebrated for its surface or placer diggings. All are now abandoned. The holes that the miners dug remind you of thousands of open graves. The streams of water they brought from the mountains by ditches to wash their gold have all resumed their natural channels; all is silent as the grave. The little village, once so full of life, is rotting down. Nothing but a store, a tavern, a grog-shop and a few huts are left. Richer mines and combined capital have superseded individual effort.

Passing by rail and stage about five hundred miles north, we are now at Lake Tahoe, on the northern line of California, and the southern line of Nevada, about one half of the lake being in either state. The lake is fifty miles long and fifteen miles wide. It is six thousand two hundred feet above the level of the sea; it is surrounded by mountains from two thousand to five thousand feet above the lake, capped with snow fifty feet deep when we were there, the 15th of June. You can have no idea from any description of the beauty of this vast sheet of water, hemmed in, as it is, by the beautiful snow-capped mountains. The bottom of the lake seems to be various ranges of submerged mountains, answering exactly to the topography of those above and around, rising at the cone of the ridge to within twenty feet of the level of the lake, then sinking at a few hundred feet to a depth of two thousand two hundred feet. In the lake are several boiling springs of hot water, coming

up through the cold water of the lake. One of them they have coffer-dammed, and carry the water by pipes to large bathing houses on the shore. It is claimed the water cures cutaneous diseases.

We took a pleasant row in a skiff about fourteen miles over the lake, and up a bay about four miles in width. All the scenery around is beautifully mirrored in this placid, glassy water. Here is, perhaps, the finest echo in the world. Every word, and every syllable in every word, comes back from the mocking mountains with perfect accuracy—

> Echo springs up from her home in the rock
> And seizes the perishing strain,
> And sends the gay challenge with shadowy mock
> From mountain to mountain again.

We crossed the lake in a pleasant little steamer on our way to Virginia City.

From Tahoe to Carson City, by stage. Dust intolerable. From Carson to Virginia City by rail.

Virginia City has a population of twelve thousand. It is built on the side of a steep mountain. Here are the great mines of the world, the Bonanza, Virginia, Comstock, and others, all within the limits of the city. They have gone down to the depth of two thousand two hundred feet, and are still going down, down, down, as all do who go after gold—where, I won't say; you may. The yield per day is fabulous. The capital here invested in mining is about one hundred millions more than the value of the whole real and personal estate of Louisville.

Here you see more idlers, more gamblers, and loafers, than in any city of treble its population on the Continent. The main street of the city is about a mile in length. About every third house is a gambling-house; they are as open day and night as are our shops on Fourth Street. At night, when the miners come from the mines, they hurry to these gaming-houses, and often stake their all upon the turn of a card. It is considered unmanly to complain if they lose, and impolite to exult if they win. Hence the games are played in silence. I counted one hundred and fifty men in one saloon, all gambling or idly watching the game. The most attractive table was where a comely woman played the game of "twenty-one up" at cards. She was richly bedecked with jewels, quite witty, and pleasant.

It is in Virginia City that Mark Twain gives so amusing an account of the burial of Buck Fanshaw. Many a Fanshaw lives there now. As this is a note from a diary of my thoughts, I thought of Fanshaw and Scotty and will here read. [Delivering this lecture, Mr. Speed here read the story of Buck Fanshaw and Scotty Briggs with a most pleasing and humorous emphasis.]

Leaving Virginia City, and again reaching the Central Pacific, we are homeward bound. It is time for reflection. The all-absorbing subject, when we were in California, was the Chinese question. All the newspapers, both city and country, were filled with it; all seemed to be opposed to the Chinese. Those who thought this opposition wrong, spoke in subdued tones

and with bated breath. The public mind was stimulated to an alarming degree. Several mobs had occurred, many of the poor people had been killed, their houses burned, and the inmates driven away. Why, I would ask? The universal answer was, that they work too cheap. That the proud American, the Irish, and German can not and will not compete with such cheap labor. How, in a free country, I asked, is it that a man can not sell his labor to whom he pleases, and for what he pleases? The ready answer is stereotyped, "This is a white man's country, and these are not white men," or "This is a Christian country, and these are not Christians." It reminded me of the story of our Puritan forefathers. When they met in council they had some religious misgivings about their cruel treatment to the Indians. The council passed two resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That the earth and the fullness thereof belongs to the saints.

"2. *Resolved*, That we are the saints."

These were compromise resolutions, and passed unanimously. If there be any saints in California, however, we did not see them.

The Chinese are a quiet, frugal, industrious people. They seem to do all the work that is done, except mining, in California. They are cooks, waiters, house-servants, wood-choppers, railroad laborers, farm-hands, gardeners, washers and ironers. They are neat in their persons and apparel for people of their class. The men have no beard until they are fifty. They are very uni-

form in their size, active and strong. You never see a corpulent or bald-headed Chinaman. They are almond eyed, copper colored, and wear long cues. They drink no whisky, and follow very much in practice the hard and frugal precepts of Franklin. They can all read and write. They have their joss houses, where they worship. They have the gods of peace, of war, of medicine, etc. They teach the philosophy of Confucius, and practice pretty well his precepts. They never beg, but, like Christian neighbors, they do sometimes steal. We send paid missionaries to their country to teach them to be Christians. They come to our country without pay and ask to work for bread, and we Christians give them instead a stone.

The Chinaman is never naturalized; he asks not to share in the great American privilege, suffrage. He is content to abide by the laws that others make. There have come to the Pacific coast, since the Burlingame treaty, one hundred thousand men, scattered over the states of Oregon, Nevada, and California. Seventy thousand are now there. Only one thousand two hundred and fifty women have come; of these one thousand are there now. Insignificant as is this number, our two great political parties, jealous of their rights — *shame, shame* upon them! — at their last national conventions both passed resolutions indicative of their fears lest this handful of people would overrun our country, undermine our institutions, and endanger the liberties of forty millions of free white men and

women. Ours is the land of the free and the home of the brave, and every man and boy in California is ready to show his bravery by stoning a Chinaman.

What do you think of California? asks every one. Her history is wonderful. Acquired from Mexico as one of the results of the Mexican war in 1847, she remained in a territorial condition but a short time. In 1849 she held a convention and formed a State constitution. In 1850 she was admitted into the Union. She was the fairest bride ever presented for union. Her atmosphere so pure that you can see objects at an incredible distance, her breezes laden with the perfume of wild flowers, her brow begirt with a tiara of diamonds and her skirts bespangled with gold, her sandaled feet resting on the golden shore of the great Pacific, her bridal vail formed from the mist of the sea, and the dews of the mountain extending from her head to her feet—thus she came in, the first State wedded to the Union on the western slope. There she is, twenty-seven years old, in all her wealth of beauty, with her great cities, plains, forests and golden treasure, improved by skill and labor. In square miles her territory is about equal to that of the six New England States. She has a greater variety of climate than any State in the Union. Producing many of the fruits of the tropics, and all those of the temperate zone in great perfection, her products are gold and silver, wheat, barley, cattle, sheep, fruit, and timber. Her prairies are large, her mountains high, and her earthquakes frequent and frightful.

Her flowers are wild, luxuriant, and beautiful—among them one very rare, the snow-plant. It grows in great abundance on the mountains around Lake Tahoe. The lake, as I have said, is sixty-two hundred feet above the level of the sea. These flowers you find from four hundred to five hundred feet above the level of the lake at the foot of and in the ridge of the snow-banks. The plant is bulbous, with a stem as large as one's arm, varying in height from nine to eighteen inches. It is deep red, shaped like an asparagus stalk. Its leaves hug close to the stem in folds, like the onion. The inside of the leaf is most beautiful. The main stem, or spine of the leaf, with the ribs which shoot out from it are pale red, varying in color but resembling the most delicate tints of the Florida shells or of the rainbow. Its flower is red and very beautiful. I will not attempt to describe it.

The people of California are nearly all adventurers. They measure every thing by the gold standard, men as well as mules. You never hear of Mr. Smith as a good man, or Mr. Brown as an honest man, or Mr. Jones as a Christian. But Mr. S. has twenty thousand million, Mr. B. has ten million, and Mr. J. five million, and so on. The more he has, the better he is—and it matters not how he got it, so he has it. In California

> "Money makes the man, the want of it the fellow,
> The rest is all either leather or prunella."

I could but think of this as I saw the burial vault of W. C. Ralston. He was better known for his great

money dealings, for keeping one hundred horses and thirty vehicles for his own use, his wild extravagance, his enterprise, and his charities, than any man who has lived in America. He was as well known in California as was Clay in Kentucky, or Jackson in Tennessee, receiving for his personal service $60,000 per year from the bank of California, and $40,000 from other corporations. Yet he went down in the storm. On the door of his small vault is,

"WM. C. RALSTON:
Born in New York; died in San Francisco, aged fifty-two years.
Adieu."

He bid the world adieu, and ended his life in a watery grave—

'T is the wink of an eye, 't is the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud—
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud!

I thought of the fable of the oak and the violet. The tall oak, the king of the forest, catching the first beams of the morning sun, proud of its height and glory, looked down upon the humble violet at its feet, and thus spoke, "Poor little violet, how sweet you are! If you were only up here where men could see and admire you, how happy and proud you would be." The modest little violet blushed, and for a time was unhappy at her humble lot. At night the storm came and the great proud oak went down with a crash, its great branches prostrate on the earth and its roots in the air, never to rise again. The modest little violet peeped out unhurt,

fragrant as ever, and was ever after content with her lot. The great financial storm that has taken up by the roots so many tall oaks, has left many a violet fragrant with honest toil, contentment, and Christian charity.

I do not underrate the people of California. They have accomplished much. San Francisco, the New York of the Pacific coast, has a population of three hundred thousand; about double the size of our city, the growth of the last twenty-nine years. Its buildings are grand, its shipping immense—all seem to be proud of it. The instincts of the people are quick, and they are much given to gambling. Their fortunes, unless well established, are fleeting as the clouds. One young man, a Kentuckian, told me that he had made $200,000 last year. "In what business?" I asked. "In the put and call business," he replied. I read of his failure not long ago.

From May to November it never rains. From November to May it is seldom dry. The crops are more uncertain than with us. I would not advise a poor man to go there. Every thing is done on a large scale. Individual effort can do but little against combined capital.

Give me for my home old Kentucky, where we have a better distribution of property; where an easy conscience gives contentment, without great wealth; where an independent peasantry is the strength of the State—

> Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself has said
> This is my own, my native land?

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